

What is claimed is:

1. A method for providing streaming media in an existing video delivery system operated by a system operator, comprising the steps of:
 - securely downloading a player for streaming media content to a consumer device via an existing delivery network; and
 - processing said streaming media content for delivery over said existing delivery network to the consumer device for decoding and display by said player.
2. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said processing of said streaming media content comprises:
 - encapsulating said streaming media content in an MPEG-2 transport stream.
3. A method in accordance with claim 2, further comprising:
 - multiplexing said MPEG-2 transport stream with additional MPEG-2 transport streams to provide a multiplexed MPEG-2 transport stream for delivery to the consumer device.
4. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said processing of said streaming media content comprises:
 - providing said streaming media to said consumer device using Data Over Cable Service Interface Specification (DOCSIS).
5. A method in accordance with claim 4, further comprising:
 - updating channel maps to reflect the presence of the streaming media content.
6. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said processing of said streaming media content comprises:

transcoding said streaming media content from a first format to a second format compatible with said player.

7. A method in accordance with claim 6, wherein said second format comprises an MPEG-2 program stream.

8. A method in accordance with claim 7, further comprising:
multiplexing said MPEG-2 program stream with additional MPEG-2 program streams to provide a multiplexed MPEG-2 transport stream for delivery to the consumer device.

9. A method in accordance with claim 6, wherein said processing of said streaming media content further comprises:
encapsulating said transcoded streaming media content in an MPEG-2 transport stream.

10. A method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:
securely downloading a substitute player to the consumer device in place of an existing player to accommodate a different encoding scheme of the streaming media content.

11. A method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:
securely downloading an additional player to the consumer device to accommodate a different encoding scheme of the streaming media content.

12. A method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:
tracking the delivery of said streaming media content by the system operator.

13. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said player is securely downloaded from within the system operator's walled garden.
14. A method in accordance with claim 13, wherein said content is provided from outside of the walled garden.
15. A method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:
providing a percentage of a fee for delivery of said streaming media content from a streaming media content provider to said system operator.
16. A method in accordance with claim 15, wherein:
said fee is enabled by referral information embedded in a uniform resource locator associated with the content.
17. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said content is provided on a conditional access basis by one of the system operator or a content provider.
18. A method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:
providing digital rights management (DRM) of the content by one of the system operator or a content provider.
19. A method in accordance with claim 18, wherein said digital rights management comprises:
encrypting of said streaming media content for secure delivery.
20. A method in accordance with claim 18, wherein said digital rights management is enabled using extensible rights markup language (XrML).
21. A method in accordance with claim 18, further comprising:

converting third party DRM schemes to a system operator's native DRM scheme to enable secure delivery of streaming media content from multiple third parties over the existing delivery network.

22. A method in accordance with claim 18, wherein said consumer device is enabled to accommodate multiple DRM software implementations.

23. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said streaming media content is provided by one of a third party content provider or the system operator.

24. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the player is one of a third party content provider's player or a system operator's player.

25. A method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:
modifying channel maps to reflect the presence of the streaming media content.

26. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said content is offered by one of a content provider or the system operator on one of a subscription basis, a pay-per-use basis, or an on-demand basis.

27. A method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:
allocating a portion of bandwidth of the existing delivery network to a streaming media content provider; and
billing said content provider based on the amount of allocated bandwidth.

28. A method in accordance with claim 27, wherein:
digital rights management of the content is controlled by the content provider;
and
access to said content is controlled by the content provider.

29. A method in accordance with claim 27, wherein:
said content is offered by the content provider based on one of a subscription basis or a pay-per-use basis.
30. A method in accordance with claim 27, further comprising:
tracking the delivery of said content by the system operator.
31. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said existing video delivery system comprises at least one of a cable video delivery system, a satellite video delivery system, and an off-air delivery system.
32. A system for providing streaming media in an existing video delivery system operated by a system operator, comprising:
a video delivery system headend; and
a plurality of consumer devices communicating with the headend via an existing delivery network, wherein:
a player for streaming media content is downloaded from said headend to a consumer device via said network; and
a processor for processing said streaming media content for delivery over the network to the consumer device for decoding and display by said player.
33. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein said processor encapsulates said streaming media content in an MPEG-2 transport stream.
34. A system in accordance with claim 33, further comprising:
a multiplexer for multiplexing said MPEG-2 transport stream with additional MPEG-2 transport streams to provide a multiplexed MPEG-2 transport stream for delivery to the consumer device.

35. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein said streaming media content is delivered using Data Over Cable Service Interface Specification (DOCSIS).
36. A system in accordance with claim 35, wherein:
channel maps are updated to reflect the presence of the streaming media content.
37. A system in accordance with claim 32, further comprising:
a transcoder for transcoding streaming media content from a first format to a second format compatible with said player.
38. A system in accordance with claim 37, wherein said second format comprises an MPEG-2 program stream.
39. A system in accordance with claim 38, further comprising:
a multiplexer for multiplexing said MPEG-2 program stream with additional MPEG-2 program streams to provide a multiplexed MPEG-2 transport stream for delivery to the consumer device.
40. A system in accordance with claim 37, wherein said processor encapsulates said transcoded streaming media content in an MPEG-2 transport stream.
41. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein:
a substitute player is securely downloaded to the consumer device in place of an existing player to accommodate a different encoding scheme of the streaming media content.
42. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein:

an additional player is securely downloaded to the consumer device to accommodate a different encoding scheme of the streaming media content.

43. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein:
the delivery of said streaming media content is tracked by the system operator.
44. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein said player is securely downloaded from within the system operator's walled garden.
45. A system in accordance with claim 44, wherein said content is provided from outside of the walled garden.
46. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein:
a percentage of a fee for delivery of said streaming media content is provided from a streaming media content provider to said system operator.
47. A system in accordance with claim 46, wherein:
said fee is enabled by referral information embedded in a uniform resource locator associated with the content.
48. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein said content is provided on a conditional access basis by one of the system operator or a content provider.
49. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein:
digital rights management (DRM) of the content is provided by one of the system operator or a content provider.
50. A system in accordance with claim 49, wherein said digital rights management comprises:

encrypting of said streaming media content for secure delivery.

51. A system in accordance with claim 49, wherein said digital rights management is enabled using extensible rights markup language (XrML).

52. A system in accordance with claim 49, further comprising:
a processor for converting third party DRM schemes to a system operator's native DRM scheme to enable secure delivery of streaming media content from multiple third parties over the existing delivery network.

53. A system in accordance with claim 49, wherein said consumer device is enabled to accommodate multiple DRM software implementations.

54. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein said streaming media content is provided by one of a third party content provider or the system operator.

55. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein the player is one of a third party content provider's player or a system operator's player.

56. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein:
channel maps are modified to reflect the presence of the streaming media content.

57. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein said content is offered by the system operator on one of a subscription basis or a pay-per-use basis.

58. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein:
a portion of bandwidth of the existing delivery network is allocated to a streaming media content provider; and

said content provider is billed based on the amount of allocated bandwidth.

59. A system in accordance with claim 58, wherein:
digital rights management of the content is controlled by the content provider;
and

access to said content is controlled by the content provider.

60. A system in accordance with claim 58, wherein:
said content is offered by the content provider based on one of a subscription
basis or a pay-per-use basis.

61. A system in accordance with claim 58, wherein:
the delivery of said content is tracked by the system operator.

62. A system in accordance with claim 32, wherein said existing video delivery
system comprises at least one of a cable video delivery system, a satellite video delivery
system, and an off-air broadcast delivery system.

63. A method for providing streaming media in an existing video delivery system
operated by a system operator, comprising the steps of:
transcoding said streaming media content from a first format to a second format
compatible with a consumer device; and
delivering said transcoded streaming media content to said consumer device for
decoding and display over an existing delivery network.

64. A method in accordance with claim 63, wherein said transcoding of said
streaming media content comprises:
converting said streaming media content into an MPEG-2 program stream.

65. A method in accordance with claim 64, further comprising:
multiplexing said MPEG-2 program stream with additional MPEG-2 program streams to provide a multiplexed MPEG-2 transport stream for delivery to the consumer device.
66. A method in accordance with claim 63, wherein said transcoding of said streaming media content comprises:
converting said streaming media content for transport via Data Over Cable Service Interface Specification (DOCSIS).
67. A method in accordance with claim 66, further comprising:
updating channel maps to reflect the presence of the streaming media content.
68. A method in accordance with claim 63, further comprising:
encapsulating the transcoded streaming media content in an MPEG-2 transport stream prior to delivery to the consumer device.
69. A method in accordance with claim 68, further comprising:
multiplexing said MPEG-2 transport stream with additional MPEG-2 transport streams to provide a multiplexed MPEG-2 transport stream for delivery to the consumer device.
70. A method in accordance with claim 63, further comprising:
securely downloading a substitute player to the consumer device in place of an existing player to accommodate a different encoding scheme of the streaming media content.
71. A method in accordance with claim 63, further comprising:

securely downloading an additional player to the consumer device to accommodate a different encoding scheme of the streaming media content.

72. A method in accordance with claim 63, further comprising:
tracking the delivery of said streaming media content by the system operator.
73. A method in accordance with claim 63, wherein said streaming media content is provided from within the system operator's walled garden.
74. A method in accordance with claim 63, wherein said streaming media content is provided from outside of the walled garden.
75. A method in accordance with claim 63, further comprising:
providing a percentage of a fee for delivery of said streaming media content from a streaming media content provider to said system operator.
76. A method in accordance with claim 75, wherein:
said fee is enabled by referral information embedded in a uniform resource locator associated with the content.
77. A method in accordance with claim 63, wherein said content is provided on a conditional access basis by one of the system operator or a content provider.
78. A method in accordance with claim 63, further comprising:
providing digital rights management (DRM) of the content by one of the system operator or a content provider.
79. A method in accordance with claim 78, wherein said digital rights management comprises:

encrypting of said streaming media content for secure delivery.

80. A method in accordance with claim 78, wherein said digital rights management is enabled using extensible rights markup language (XrML).

81. A method in accordance with claim 78, further comprising:
converting third party DRM schemes to a system operator's native DRM scheme to enable secure delivery of streaming media content from multiple third parties over the existing delivery network.

82. A method in accordance with claim 78, wherein said consumer device is enabled to accommodate multiple DRM software implementations.

83. A method in accordance with claim 63, wherein said streaming media content is provided by one of a third party content provider or the system operator.

84. A method in accordance with claim 63, further comprising:
modifying channel maps to reflect the presence of the streaming media content.

85. A method in accordance with claim 63, wherein said content is offered by the system operator on one of a subscription basis or a pay-per-use basis.

86. A method in accordance with claim 63, further comprising:
allocating a portion of bandwidth of the existing delivery network to a streaming media content provider; and
billing said content provider based on the amount of allocated bandwidth.

87. A method in accordance with claim 86, wherein:

digital rights management of the content is controlled by the content provider;
and
access to said content is controlled by the content provider.

88. A method in accordance with claim 86, wherein:
said content is offered by the content provider based on one of a subscription basis or a pay-per-use basis.
89. A method in accordance with claim 86, further comprising:
tracking the delivery of said content by the system operator.
90. A method in accordance with claim 63, wherein said existing video delivery system comprises at least one of a cable video delivery system, a satellite video delivery system, and an off-air delivery system.
91. A system for providing streaming media in an existing video delivery system operated by a system operator, comprising:
a video delivery system headend;
a plurality of consumer appliances;
a transcoder located at the headend for transcoding said streaming media content from a first format to a second format compatible with a consumer device; and
an existing delivery network for delivering said transcoded streaming media content from the headend to said consumer device for decoding and display.
92. A system in accordance with claim 91, wherein said transcoder converts said streaming media content into an MPEG-2 program stream.
93. A system in accordance with claim 92, further comprising:

a multiplexer for multiplexing said MPEG-2 program stream with additional MPEG-2 program streams to provide a multiplexed MPEG-2 transport stream for delivery to the consumer device.

94. A system in accordance with claim 91, wherein said transcoder converts said streaming media content for transport via Data Over Cable Service Interface Specification (DOCSIS).
95. A system in accordance with claim 94, wherein:
channel maps are updated to reflect the presence of the streaming media content.
96. A system in accordance with claim 91, further comprising:
a processor for encapsulating said transcoded streaming media content in an MPEG-2 transport stream prior to delivery of the content to the consumer device.
97. A system in accordance with claim 96, further comprising:
a multiplexer for multiplexing said MPEG-2 transport stream with additional MPEG-2 transport streams to provide a multiplexed MPEG-2 transport stream for delivery to the consumer device.
98. A system in accordance with claim 91, wherein:
a substitute player is securely downloaded to the consumer device in place of an existing player to accommodate a different encoding scheme of the streaming media content.
99. A system in accordance with claim 91, wherein:
an additional player is securely downloaded to the consumer device to accommodate a different encoding scheme of the streaming media content.

100. A system in accordance with claim 91, wherein:
the delivery of said streaming media content is tracked by the system operator.
101. A system in accordance with claim 91, wherein said streaming media content is provided from within the system operator's walled garden.
102. A system in accordance with claim 91, wherein said streaming media content is provided from outside of the walled garden.
103. A system in accordance with claim 91, wherein:
a percentage of a fee for delivery of said streaming media content is provided from a streaming media content provider to said system operator.
104. A system in accordance with claim 103, wherein:
said fee is enabled by referral information embedded in a uniform resource locator associated with the content.
105. A system in accordance with claim 91, wherein said content is provided on a conditional access basis by one of the system operator or a content provider.
106. A system in accordance with claim 91, wherein:
digital rights management (DRM) of the content is provided by one of the system operator or a content provider.
107. A system in accordance with claim 106, wherein said digital rights management comprises:
encrypting of said streaming media content for secure delivery.

108. A system in accordance with claim 106, wherein said digital rights management is enabled using extensible rights markup language (XrML).
109. A system in accordance with claim 106, further comprising:
a processor for converting third party DRM schemes to a system operator's native DRM scheme to enable secure delivery of streaming media content from multiple third parties over the existing delivery network.
110. A system in accordance with claim 106, wherein said consumer device is enabled to accommodate multiple DRM software implementations.
111. A system in accordance with claim 91, wherein said streaming media content is provided by one of a third party content provider or the system operator.
112. A system in accordance with claim 91, further comprising:
channel maps are modified to reflect the presence of the streaming media content.
113. A system in accordance with claim 91, wherein said content is offered by the system operator on one of a subscription basis or a pay-per-use basis.
114. A system in accordance with claim 91, wherein:
a portion of bandwidth of the existing delivery network is allocated to a streaming media content provider; and
said content provider is billed based on the amount of allocated bandwidth.
115. A system in accordance with claim 114, wherein:
digital rights management of the content is controlled by the content provider;
and

access to said content is controlled by the content provider.

116. A system in accordance with claim 114, wherein:
said content is offered by the content provider based on one of a subscription basis or a pay-per-use basis.

117. A system in accordance with claim 114, wherein:
the delivery of said content is tracked by the system operator.

118. A system in accordance with claim 91, wherein said existing video delivery system comprises at least one of a cable video delivery system, a satellite video delivery system, and an off-air delivery system.